

From the Other Side of You

by Jen Hunt

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Summary: A Mommy!Regina fic. Regina becomes Emma's mother when she enacts the Dark Curse and steals her from Snow and Charming. She raises her in Storybrooke, and all is going well for the two until a pesky little DNA test gets in the way...

1. Chapter 1

A/N: I had this idea for a new story, and I thought it might be interesting to see how it plays out. You guys'll have to let me know what you think of the story and if it should be continued. Enjoy! :)

"Mommy?"

"Yes, Emma?" Regina replied, coming up behind the child and gently twisting a lock of the girl's blonde hair between her fingers. She slowly raised her coffee mug to her lips, relishing the bitter burn of the fluid as it slid down her throat.

The little girl swiveled in her chair and tilted her head back so she could make eye contact with Regina. "How come I don't look like you?"

"Wellâ€¦ Umâ€¦" Regina looked away from Emma, struggling for an explanation.

Of course, she didn't want to tell the child that she'd cursed a realm and stolen her from her real parents via that curse to get revenge on them. But she really did love the child, for all it was worth.

She glanced back at the girl, who was fidgeting in her seat.

"You don't have to look like me to be my daughter," Regina said finally, but the five-year-old had already moved on to something else and wasn't listening anymore.

****Ten Years Later****

Fifteen-year-old Emma stood in front of the mirror, comparing herself against a picture of her mother. She looked at her mom's dark hair and dark eyes, and her blonde hair and green eyes. Her mom's tanned skin and her pale skin. Regina's sculpted face and Emma's rounder, smoother one. Nothing about them seemed to match up.

Even their mannerisms were fairly different for two people who lived in the same household. One drank coffee habitually and ate like a rabbit, the other coated her hot chocolate in cinnamon and shoveled down greasy grilled cheeses like her life depended on it. One was strict and stiff, the other shy and withdrawn; one had the tendency to light her words on fire, the other had the tendency to say nothing at all.

Emma padded over to where her mom slept, snoring loudly yet soundly. Regina had always told her, over and over, that she was no doubt her mom_, but Emma needed to know._

Clean Q-Tip and picture in hand, Emma gently turned her mother over and swabbed the inside of her already-opened cheek. She dropped the sample inside of a plastic baggie and sealed it shut, praying silently that the test would confirm once and for all that Regina was, indeed, her birthmother. She wasn't prepared otherwise.

She headed downstairs.

For a long time, Emma stood, listening to the wind whistling outside her window as if it were taking a stroll through the trees. Branches assaulted the sides of the house, begging to be let in. If only they knew what inside was actually like. She watched the sunset paint everything in gold and shadows, wondering how something could be so beautifully sad.

Then, there was a gentle knock at the door, and Emma opened it, handing the labeled Ziplocs to her friend so he could take them to the hospital for her.

****Three Days Later****

An envelope. It sat on the counter like road kill, pitied but untouched. Emma could only stand to tear a small part of it open every once in a while. The entire process took about forty minutes, as she had to repeatedly get up and get away from the letter. The letter was a fire, and the sparks kept trying to reach out and burn her.

When she finally held the fresh piece of paper in her hands, she stared at it for what felt like forever.

Everything started turning white. The room spun and tilted on its sides like a dreidel.

Regina entered the kitchen then, carrying her usual cappuccino in her hands. She noticed Emma. "Everything okay, Em?"

Emma quickly shoved the paper into her pocket and nodded, but the action made her incredibly dizzy. She rushed to the sink and

vomited.

Regina stood behind her and twisted her daughter's hair into a bun, rubbing the girl's back soothingly as she did so.

****The Next Day****

When Emma awoke the next morning, her mouth tasted like acid, and her stomach flipped and twisted like a gymnast.

0.00%.

That was what the paper had said.

Emma could see the number wherever she looked, whenever she blinked, as if it were etched on her irises and engraved into her eyelids.

There was absolutely no chance that her mother was her mother.

Emma had always known, but she'd never really known. She was different, but she'd thought maybe she was just a screw-up. A freak of nature. The dog raised by monkeys. That was one luxury that being the odd-one-out everywhere afforded her.

There was a cautious knock on her bedroom door, and Regina entered, carrying a small glass of water. She slowly made her way to the bed and offered it to Emma, but the girl refused.

"You neverâ€¦ You told meâ€¦" Emma struggled.

Regina's brow dipped in concern. "What? Is something wrong, Em?"

"You lied to me," Emma spat out like poison. "You're not my real mom."

Regina gently brushed back a stray strand of Emma's matted hair. "Why would you say that? Of course I'm your mother."

Emma reached into her pocket, pulled out the wadded sheet of paper, and tossed it onto the bed, next to Regina.

"What's this?" Regina asked.

Emma didn't answer, so Regina carefully un-balled the paper. Her heart rocketed in her chest as she spotted the same terrifying fact of science that Emma had:

0.00%.

And, suddenly, Regina knew that they had entered dangerous territory.

2. Chapter 2

****Back in the Enchanted Forest****

_David set his daughter down gently in the wardrobe, gently kissing

her on the forehead before he did so. His ribs were still bleeding from the sword wound, but he could breathe easier now that his Emma was finally safe. She was so brand-new and pink and wrinkly and innocent that it astonished him. He couldn't believe such tiny, rose-colored hands somehow held enough power to save this Godforsaken kingdom from its demise._

"_Goodbye, baby girl," he whispered to her. "Come back for your Daddy and Mommy someday."_

As he turned around, Regina materialized in a cloud of smoke. "Hello, Charming," she acknowledged wickedly. She offered him a sharp, cutting smile.

David moved to place himself between the baby and Regina, but he was already flying, hurtling across the room. With a nonchalant flick of her manicured hand, she had just separated him from his daughter for what they all had believed would be eternity.

_Regina leaned down and picked up baby Emma from the wardrobe, cooing at her, and David cursed himself for having been selfish enough to take a final goodbye. He should've just closed the damn wardrobe and let his daughter be safe. His selfishness had cost his daughter the chance to grow up being loved. _

He jumped up, preparing to lunge at Regina, but the Evil Queen held him back once more with her magic.

"_Any minute now," Regina said quietly, maliciously, her words biting him with every breath that she took, "you won't remember any of this, but I'll be raising _your _child. And I'll know you're suffering in your endless, lonely life. No kingdom, no wife, no child. Nothing you truly love. Just you."_

_The whole thing looked like a scene from a storybook, and maybe it was: Regina, crouched over baby Emma, smiling malignantly and making soft little noises to the child; David, now slumped in the corner and still unable to move, watching the dark eyes of his new daughter peer cautiously at Regina as the purple fog set in, curling over them, sweeping, chokingâ€¦| _

_Suffocating. _

****Present Day****

Emma had buried herself as deep under the covers as her bed allowed. Her nose was raw and cut, stinging from blowing it so often, and her eyes were red and swollen and shiny with tears. She kept her eyes squeezed tightly shut and clamped her hands onto her ears as if letting the outside world in would kill her slowly and painfully. Things still found their way in, though, against her will. Light seeped into her brain when the covers were lifted from her; a voice told her it was time for school. Emma ignored them both and sobbed quietly.

The covers returned to her.

A few hours later, Emma woke to a hand stroking her hair, tracing patterns on her cheek and forehead like it had done since she was a baby and couldn't even lift her own head. Her vision was blurred, but

she knew it was her mother who was sitting on the bed beside her. Emma realized she must've cried herself to sleep.

Emma suddenly lurched herself forward and latched onto Regina's waist. Regina responded by wrapping one arm securely around the girl's back and gripping the other on her blonde, sweat-soaked locks. She never wanted to let the girl go. What had started as revenge had cruelly turned itself into something Regina knew couldn't last, but, oh, how badly she wanted it to.

Emma didn't notice, but Regina's eyes were red and swollen, too. She had been crying, too.

Regina pulled away from Emma, brown eyes rimmed in red. "Do you want to find your birthmother?" This question was a lie. No way could she actually offer or pull through with that option.

Emma sniffed and wiped her nose on her sleeve. "No."

That was a lie, too.

****A Couple Days Later****

Naturally, it wasn't long until Emma came to her mother, asking to know who had brought her into this world and then so brazenly and carelessly tossed her away, like garbage.

It was only a matter of time, really. Emma wanted to know exactly what was so obviously unlovable about her.

Regina tipped the girl's chin up. "You're not unlovable," she assured her.

~o~

To play along, Regina pretended to help Emma look for nonexistent adoption papers, birth certificates, anything. They dragged boxes down from shelves, hauled bins out of storage, and spent hours shuffling and rifling through papers, letters, and documents. Nothing.

Regina felt immensely guilty about the whole charade; lying to Emma's face was much more painful and difficult than lying by omission. She watched Emma struggling for answers, hunched over hundreds and hundreds of papers, tossing each failure aside like she imagined her birthmother having done to her as a baby.

Regina offered Emma the plate of crackers and cheeses that was sitting on the coffee table. The girl looked tempted but refused.

"I'll eat when we find my birthmother."

Regina blew out a sigh; her brown bangs fluttered in her breath. Emma hadn't eaten anything since two days before now, when she'd appealed to Regina to help her find her birthmother. Emma was so obsessed with finding this woman that she didn't want to waste a second of her valuable, waking moments to eat.

"You may never-"

Regina cut herself off abruptly, realizing what she was about to say would only make Emma upset. It was too late, though. The meaning was clear:

You may never find her.

Even though her family situation hadn't exactly been ideal, Regina had never had any idea of what it was like to be unloved and unwanted. Her parents had kept her - and loved her - even in their own unconventional ways.

Emma's parents hadn't given her up, per se, but that's what Emma believed.

Emma's face crumpled. It was like watching someone wad up a paper towel.

"No, no, no," Regina said. She quickly scooted herself closer to Emma and pulled her crying daughter into her arms. "I'm sorry, Em; I didn't mean to say that," she whispered soothingly, rocking the teenager gently in her arms. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sure we'll find her."

Another lie.

End
file.